Setting up of international size shipyards

4603. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a plan has been drawn up to set up two new international size shipyards along the two coasts of the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the specific areas identified for setting up these projects, investments proposed and time-frame therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Government is exploring the possibility of setting up two international size shipyards in the country subject to favourable technical analysis and feasibility study. Location, investment, time frame etc. will be decided later based on technical analysis and feasibility study.

Oil spillage after collision of vessels

4604. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent oil spillage in Goa following a collision between two vessels has highlighted the inadequacy of the existing anchorage loading and pilferage operation especially involving carriers of crude oil, iron ore and coal; and

(b) the steps that are being taken by Government to ensure safe loading and unloading operations at the anchorage ports?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The oil spillage in Goa occured due to collision between an iron ore carrying barge 'Prapti' and vessel 'M.V. Maritime Wisdom', which has raised certain concerns about movement of barges while carrying out the loading operation. The movement of barges in the ports other than major ports is controlled and regulated by the respective State Governments. As far as major ports are concerned, the barges are inspected by the designated port authorities for safe manning and condition of equipments. The Masters are required to have adequate qualifications. The barges are also required to have

adequate communication equipments. The subject matter of enhanced safety measures in operation of barges is under active consideration of the Directorate General of Shipping. These measures are aimed at enhancing safety in the operation of barges.

Fire at Chennai Port

4605. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a major fire occured in the Chennai port, recently;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the amount of loss estimated by Government due to this fire; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to prevent such fire in the ports across the country?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) A small fire occured in the heaps of coal yard at about 8.00 PM on 22.02.2005 in the Chennai Port Trust because of spontaneous ignition of coal in the coal yard due to friction, temperature and wind.

(c) The estimated amount of loss is Rs. 2,35,200.

(d) Depending on their requirements, every major port has developed its-own fire safety plan and fire fighting system. Such plan *inter-alia* includes fire patrolling, periodic drills, regular maintenance of fire fighting equipments etc. aimed at preventing occurence of fire at major ports.

Development of roads in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh

† 4606. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent annually on widening, new construction and improvement (PR) during the last three years under National Highways and Corridor Construction Scheme in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.